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# **U.S. and Africa in the 21st Century**

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Long-term trends in Africa are encouraging, and our mutual interests are growing. Last June, South Africa handed over power from one democratically elected government to another and Nigeria, under the yoke of military rule just over 150 days ago, is implementing a bold transition to civilian rule.

Economies that were registering negative growth rates in the 1980s are now growing at rates of approximately 4%, and some, such as once war-torn Mozambique, recorded double-digit growth rates last year. A new generation of Africans—governmental, non-governmental, and entrepreneurial—is emerging that is committed to market reforms and inclusive political systems. Democratic institutions, however fragile or flawed, now form the basis for government in the majority of African nations. Eleven African countries have publicly committed to fight graft and work toward a binding anti-corruption convention. And many African people are now demanding a full voice in charting their own destinies.

The United States has significant economic and security stakes in this new Africa, an Africa we no longer view as a superpower battleground or through the distorted prism of apartheid.

Our first interest in Africa, as elsewhere, is defending our own national security and protecting Americans in the United States and abroad. Everywhere, the United States faces a new set of enemies, transnational security threats that put at great risk our citizens around the world. As President Clinton has said, “the same forces of technology that offer new economic and social opportunities also create new dangers.” And no place nor no one is immune, including the continent and the people of Africa.

If some Americans were doubtful about our security interests in Africa, if their eyes were focused elsewhere, toward the Persian Gulf, the Korean Peninsula, or the Balkans, they were sadly refocused last year when bombs destroyed our embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The blasts, which killed over 200 Africans and Americans, made 1998 one of the most deadly years for international terrorism on record.

The number of terrorist incidents worldwide is also up, as the most dangerous elements of the world community become more sinister and elusive, their weapons and methods more powerful and sophisticated. Of the seven countries on the United States’ list of state-sponsors of international terror, two Libya and Sudan are in Africa. Usama bin Laden’s network is extensive throughout the continent, while Somalia has become a safe haven for terrorists and a major transit point for illicit weapons.

Yet, terrorism and extremism are not the only threats we face on the African continent. Nuclear, chemical and biological weapons proliferation, though not as prevalent as in other regions, is a serious concern in Africa. Libya aims to acquire nuclear weapons. It also continues

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to develop deadly chemical and biological weapons and long-range missiles. Sudan continues to seek a chemical weapons capability. And apartheid-era experts on weapons of mass destruction still roam free and are able to sell their knowledge to pariah states worldwide.



Africa is also perhaps the hottest world market for conventional arms merchants unloading Cold War refuse. Most of these weapons are flowing into Africa's war zones, further fueling destabilizing conflicts.

In addition, narcotics transiting through Africa constitute a significant share of the supply hitting American streets. Indeed, African organized crime groups, with hundreds of cells worldwide, are active traffickers in high-purity heroin from Asia to major metropolitan areas in

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the central and eastern United States. Approximately 30% of the heroin intercepted at U.S. ports of entry in recent years was seized from Nigerian-controlled couriers. South Africa is also emerging as a significant transshipment point, as are Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.

Furthermore, Americans lose over \$2 billion annually to African white-collar crime syndicates, mostly from financial schemes, including insurance, credit card, and advance fee fraud scams. In addition, Nigeria ranks fifth worldwide as a source of counterfeit U.S. currency.

Environmental degradation is also a global threat that affects all of us and our children. Damage done to Africa's delicate ecosystem, including deforestation, contributes to global warming—aggravating food productivity, intensifying droughts, floods, and El Niño effects, and hastening the spread of infectious diseases.

In Africa, as you know, we face some of the world's most deadly and communicable diseases, malaria, the newly arrived West Nile virus, and HIV/AIDS. As people move more easily across borders and oceans, so too do the infections they may carry. Preventing, containing, and controlling the transmission of these deadly diseases is an important security imperative for the U.S. in Africa and elsewhere.

All these transnational threats from arms flows to drug flows are most difficult to combat where national institutions are weakest, where people are poorest, and conflicts most enduring. We need strong, democratic, economically viable partners in Africa. Only such partners can be relied upon to invest in healthcare to stem disease, to foster environmentally sustainable development, to apprehend terrorists and drug traffickers, and to deny extremist elements both material support and a gullible following. In contrast, where democracy fails, poverty prevails, and strife is the norm, we risk seeing whole countries, even regions, grow more vulnerable to our most dangerous adversaries.

Africa cannot be an afterthought. We cannot afford to postpone our efforts to build a strong U.S.-Africa partnership. This partnership is a necessity, and must be a priority, if we are to secure our own future in the 21st century.

We have other important strategic interests in Africa as well. Africa is the source of over 16% of our nation's imported oil, almost as much as from the Middle East. Within the next decade, oil imports from Africa are projected to surpass those from the Persian Gulf region. The U.S. relies on Africa as a source of strategic minerals, including platinum, cobalt, bauxite, and manganese.

Moreover, the Cape controls shipping between the Atlantic and Indian Oceans. The Horn is a potential choke point for traffic between the Suez Canal and the Indian Ocean. Our base access agreement with Kenya is key to our ability to project force, when necessary, in the Persian Gulf. Add these facts to our increasing stake in Africa's emerging market, and Africa's importance to the economic well-being of the U.S. becomes self-evident.

America's reliance on Africa's markets is, in fact, growing by leaps and bounds. Some two years ago, the global financial crisis caused a major downturn in U.S. exports and unease in our export-driven economy. Yet while U.S. exports to the troubled economies of Asia and elsewhere were down by almost a third in 1998, U.S. exports to Africa increased 8%. Last year, we exported 45% more to Sub-Saharan Africa than to all the states of the former Soviet Union combined. This is almost twice as much as we exported to India with its one billion people.

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Major U.S. companies are making large investments in Africa, from Enron's \$2.5 billion contract to build a steel plant in Mozambique to Southwestern Bell Corporation's \$700 million stake in South Africa/Telkom. Boeing provides 66% of Africa's airline fleet. Caterpillar now has dealerships in 15 African countries. Indeed, Washington State's exports to Africa tripled between 1997 and 1998, from 200 to 600 million. Fully 100,000 U.S. jobs, many on the West Coast, are tied to our exports to Africa. Still, the United States' share of the African market is small, only 6%, making it the largest untapped market for the U.S. in the world. Africa's potential for tomorrow's creative entrepreneurs is explosive, especially in the natural resource sector, consumer products, agribusiness, infrastructure, and telecommunications. Just think: there are more telephones in the borough of Manhattan than in all of Africa.

Almost 50% of Africans are under the age of 15. These are young people who can develop fierce brand loyalties for everything from soft drinks to blue jeans. Africa, a market of approximately 700 million potential consumers, truly represents the last frontier for U.S. exporters and investors.

Finally, we have a significant humanitarian stake in Africa and strong cultural and historical ties to the African people. Some 12% of Americans, almost 33 million people, trace their roots to the African continent. Many Americans, not just African-Americans, feel a strong obligation to better the lives of people throughout Africa. They care not only about helping to prevent and resolve conflicts but also about responding effectively alongside the international community to crises and humanitarian disasters. Last year, the United States provided almost \$700 million in assistance to the victims of war, famine, and disease in Africa, from Sierra Leone to Sudan to Angola.

In the wake of the Cold War, President Clinton was among the first to stress that Africa's successes and failures matter directly to the United States and its citizens. Thus, he changed fundamentally the way the U.S. approaches Africa. We have moved beyond a patron-client relationship to a partnership based on mutual interest and mutual respect. We seek to work with our African partners to ensure our collective security and prosperity in the century to come.

Since 1994, we have crafted and are now implementing a visionary economic policy toward Africa to spur reform and growth for the benefit of both the United States and Africa. Under President Clinton's Partnership for Economic Growth and Opportunity, we have taken important steps to encourage greater two-way trade and private sector investment. For instance, through the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, the United States is providing \$750 million in investment financing and insurance to open road, rail, and waterways for international commerce.

Moreover, the enactment of the African Growth and Opportunity Act would directly support African nations making difficult strides to open their markets, invest in their people, and practice good governance. At the new round of World Trade Organization negotiations set to begin here later this month, the Administration will discuss with African and other partners ensuring full and beneficial participation of African countries in shaping and making more relevant to their concerns the world trade agenda. We intend to continue to provide technical assistance to help Africa build the domestic capacity necessary for trade reform to master WTO compliance issues and thus become equal partners in the new trade round. The United States also is committed to relieving hundreds of millions of dollars of Africa's debt, debt that threatens to retard progress in Africa's fastest reforming economies. At the G-8 meeting in Cologne in June, leaders approved a \$90 billion debt relief program. The Administration requested \$370 million from Congress in

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FY2000 but may only be granted a third of that to make our initial contribution to slashing global debt. The prime beneficiaries will be African.

We also are actively working to strengthen democracy and promote respect for human rights in Africa. We provided substantial assistance to support South Africa's first democratic elections in 1994. We helped finance Nigeria's recent elections and, more importantly, will invest for years to come in establishing credible, grass-roots structures and genuinely democratic institutions in this vitally important country.

At the same time, we are implementing a Great Lakes Justice program to bolster civil and military judicial institutions in volatile Central Africa. The President's \$120 million Education for Development and Democracy Initiative also aims to help improve access to technology, support girls' education, and boost civil society across the African continent.

The U.S. also continues to play an active role diplomatically and operationally to help prevent and resolve African conflicts. And today, sadly, there are too many.

For the past 16 months, at least eight countries have been embroiled in Africa's widest war in the Congo. Congo is resource rich, possessing substantial shares of the world supply of hydro-electrical power, uranium, cobalt, gold, diamonds, and copper. It also is an oil producing nation. A stable, democratic Congo could be an engine for growth throughout Africa. A fragmented, economically feeble Congo is an enormous security risk. It and other conflict zones threaten to become fertile ground for pariah states as well as launching pads for international terrorists, arms smugglers, and drug dealers.

United States diplomats from Secretary Albright to our regional ambassadors made critical interventions every step of the way in the long push to achieve the comprehensive peace agreement for the Congo signed last July in Lusaka, Zambia. This peace remains at risk, however, as rivals re-arm, re-group, and resume their hostile rhetoric. The U.S. will continue to insist that all parties to the Congo conflict uphold their obligations under the Lusaka agreement. We will hold responsible any party that abrogates this fragile, but vital, accord.

The U.S. is equally committed to helping solidify a permanent peace in Sierra Leone. There, too, our role has been instrumental. With hands-on efforts by the President's Special Envoy Jesse Jackson, Ambassador Joe Melrose, and many others, the United States brokered the cease-fire and helped negotiate the peace agreement signed last summer. We have provided more than \$110 million in logistical support to the West African peacekeeping force, ECOMOG, first in Liberia and now in Sierra Leone. Today's fragile peace accord is due primarily to the tremendous sacrifices of Nigeria, but also to the collaborative efforts of the U.S., U.K., U.N., and regional states.

In the Horn of Africa, the United States continues to work tirelessly in support of the OAU's ongoing efforts to broker an agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea. A viable and fair peace proposal is in play, and the U.S. has made plain to both sides that it cannot and will not countenance the resumption of this deadly and increasingly senseless conflict.

Still, Sudan's and Angola's longstanding conflicts continue to blaze. The United States is striving to invigorate the Kenyan-led Sudan peace process through significant process reforms and the appointment of a new special envoy to Sudan, former Congressman Harry Johnston. In

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Angola, we are strengthening our ties to the government and trying to cut off Jonas Savimbi's source of supply.

The U.S. is also working actively now with our African partners to combat transnational security threats, including providing increased training for African law enforcement officials. We are implementing anti-terrorism and counter-crime strategies. Our Safe Skies initiative aims to make African airports and airways more secure.

Finally, because two-thirds of the people affected with HIV/AIDS worldwide live in Africa, we also will fund new approaches to fighting the deadly virus. This summer, Vice President Gore announced a \$100 million initiative to stem the spread of HIV/AIDS globally, doubling our existing prevention and treatment efforts. Most of these resources will help save African lives. But, clearly, much more needs to be done.

In order to confront all these challenges, the U.S. has sought to improve dramatically the content and caliber of our dialogue with our African partners. In addition to our President and Vice President, almost every member of the President's cabinet has traveled to Africa, bringing his or her own specific expertise. Just three weeks ago, Secretary Albright completed another comprehensive visit to Africa, her sixth in seven years in President Clinton's cabinet.

Our agenda is full, but this Administration and many in Congress are committed, and I am personally committed to building a strong, viable partnership with Africa that is pragmatic and that delivers. But at a time when our national security resources are being slashed to the bone, we must work together to fulfill President Clinton's pledge to restore assistance to Africa to its historic high levels.

The U.S. must invest the dollars to help educate Africa's dreamers, to train its entrepreneurs, to ease the path for traders and investors, to fight terrorists, to catch drug traffickers and illicit weapons merchants, to help feed the hungry, house the displaced, and stop the dying.

As history is our torchlight now, it could be tomorrow's tortuous shadow if we wait too long to do the right thing. America must provide the dollars to support the peacekeepers in some of the world's most volatile zones from Congo to Sierra Leone. If Africa succeeds, we all, Africans and Americans, stand to benefit. If Africa fails, we will all pay the price. Last year, when Nelson Mandela accepted our Congressional Medal of Honor, he said: "Though the challenges of the present time for our country, our continent, and the world are greater than those we have already overcome, we face the future with confidence. We do so because despite the difficulties and the tensions that confront us, there is in all of us the capacity to touch one another's hearts across oceans and continents."

That perceived capacity will continue to motivate us as we work with our African partners to promote peace, economic growth, democracy, and respect for human rights throughout Africa. The U.S. must continue to provide support to the African people and those of their governments that take the necessary steps to meet tremendous challenges and triumph over adversity.

We must do so not simply as a moral imperative, but because it is manifestly in our own national interest to help build lasting prosperity and security in Africa.